(c) if so, what steps Government have in mind to overcome this situation on a long term basis; and

(d) whether Government would intensify research and developmental efforts and develop drought resistant varieties of seeds and also go in for non-traditional crops ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN) . (a) Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that adverse seasonal conditions are prevailing in 6 districts of the State due to deficient rainfall during current south-west monsoon.

(b) to (d) Information is being collected.

Increase in Procurement Prices of Foodgrains

773. SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA . SHRI SURESH KALMADI :

will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the prices of chemical fertilisers have increased after the decontrol and withdrawal of subsidies, if so, the reasons for drastic change in the Government policy;

(b) whether Government are aware that the above policy would result in fall of agricultural production, if so, what remedial measures Government propose to take;

(c)whether the prices of fertilisers. diesel and electricity chemical and farm machinery have increased in the recent time resulting in high cost of agricultural products; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to increase the procurement price of various foodgrains; if yes, to what extent and if not, the reasons therefor.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN) : (a) There was steep hike in the prices of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers after their decontrol. In order to reduce the subsidy burden on exchequer, the Government accepted the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Fertilizers Pricing to decontrol the price, distribution and movement of phosphatic arid potassic fertilizers.

(b) and (c) Government have announced several measures to cushion the impact of rise in price of decontrolled fertilizer. A subsidy of Rs. 1000 per tonne to the farmers on these fertilizers has been made available to the State Governments, amounting in all to Rs. 340 crores. Additional assistance to small and marginal farmers for Rs. 500 crores has also been sanctioned. Minimum support prices of major crops in Kharif announced immediately after decontrol of certain fertilizers were the highest ever in recnt time.

(d) No decision has been taken regarding increasing the procurement price of various foodgrains for the current Rabi season.

New Crop Insurance Scheme

774. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a new crop insurance scheme for the benefit of the farmers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) It has been decided that while the existing Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS) may continue, a pilot scheme charging actuarial rates of premia. covering all farmers and all crops against all risks, may be implemented in one district of every state, preferably at now unit areas.

Flood Prone Area in the Country

775. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that flood prone area in the country has increased from 25 million hectares to 40 million hectares be tween 1960 and 1990;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons therefor;